



COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

SB3181
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Thursday, March 3, 2022, 10:10 AM
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the five county level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB3181** which establishes a local agriculture transportation cost reimbursement incentive program to be administered by the Department of Agriculture to reimburse eligible producers for a portion of the producer's costs to transport agricultural commodities. There are many challenges to producing food locally while maintaining a viable business operation. We appreciate this bill that would alleviate economic strains that farmers and ranchers experience. Transportation is a large portion of a producer's expenses, but it is a necessary expense as food production often happens away from the areas of high population. With continually rising costs, this assistance from the state is appreciated and will help tremendously.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director

